(a) whether his Ministry propose to promote production of Janata cloth in the backward areas;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government are also considering to set up a vigilance committee for monitoring proper distribution of Janata cloth; and

(d) if so, by when a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Janata cloth scheme is an ongoing scheme implemented by State agencies. The production under the scheme is carried out in areas of weaver concentration including backward areas. Nineteen States and one Union Territory have undertaken production under the scheme so far. The scheme envisages providing sustained employment to the weavers on the one hand and making available cheap cloth to the consumers on the other. At present, a subsidy of Rs. 3.40 per square metre is provided for production and delivery of janata cloth.

(c) and (d) A State level mechanism has been devised in the new guidelines for monitoring proper distribution of janata cloth. A High Powered State Level Implementation Committee headed by the Chief Secretary/Secretary of the Department has been envisaged. This committee has representatives of Civil Supplies Department, of the implementing agencies, and of the distribution agencies. Committee meets every quarter to monitor production and proper distribution of cloth produced under the scheme. However, a suggestion to introduce district level committees on pilot basis to begin with in some backward districts in the country is under scrutiny of the Ministry.

Protocol signed between India and Portugal for return of gold ornaments

*166. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Portugal have recently signed any protocol regarding the return to India of securities and gold ornames etc. and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof including total weight of gold involved therein?

THE FINANCE MINISTER (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) With the approval of Government of India, an agreement has been signed at New Delhi on 14.2.1991 between the Chairman, State Bank of India (SBI) and Chairman, Banco National Ultramarino (BNU), Lisbon, for repatriation of sealed packets containing the valuables pledged against loans and safe custody articles.

(b) In terms of the said agreement BNU would transfer en block to SBI all outstanding credits, securities and safe custody articles against lumpsum payment of principal outstanding, interest thereon and a fixed service charge. The total weight of the gold ornaments at the time of their removal to Portugal was estimated at 280582 grams.

Nationalisation of textile mills

*167. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for the nationalisation of 15 textile mills; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Government are examining various options regarding the future status of the 15 takenover mills presently under the management of NTC.